

Housing a passion for art

For many students, a big part of the adventure of college life is living away from home. At PCA&D, our students live off-campus, guaranteeing an education that goes well beyond the classroom.

“Having our students living off-campus reinforces what we focus on here-- becoming a mature, independent thinker. We’re preparing them for their professional life after they graduate,” says Jane Higinbotham, PCA&D’s Director of Student Life & Housing. The department’s Housing Referral Service is set up to assist students (and their parents) in connecting with roommates and housing, in that order.



Jane Higinbotham
Director of Student Life

With most students opting for a living situation that includes one or more roommates, PCA&D lends an expert hand to help night owls and morning glories bunk with their own kind.

“If you want a roommate, our [Housing Referral Service](#) can help you” says Higinbotham. The process starts in mid-March with a list of prospective roommates, whose names are listed along with short summaries of preferences, including music, bedtime, diet, and tolerance for visitors and more.

Updates to the list come via email about once a week. “We encourage students -- via email, Facebook, telephone, or text --- to begin a dialog with people who look like they might be a good match,” she says.

The next step is for students and parents to attend the two “meet and greet” sessions at the College (in April and May) to meet potential roommates. Several landlords are also available to answer questions and set appointments for viewing apartments.

Beginning in early May, a comprehensive list of available housing is emailed to students biweekly through June, then weekly. “We focus on housing not more than six blocks from the college,” she says, “although it’s not mandatory to live in Lancaster City, it has its benefits.” In July the Housing Referral Service also hosts a housing day at the college, when students and families may have access to staff, phones, maps, directions and anything needed while scheduling appointments to view potential apartments.

Personal safety is addressed in sessions throughout the year, and [a free ride-home program](#) is made available to all BFA students living within city limits. “Personal safety for our students is important to us and the ride-home program along with special safety sessions throughout the year are effective ways to keep our students informed and alert.”

PCA&D also provides a comprehensive housing guide, with numerous checklists including an apartment search checklist and a sample roommate agreement, names of city services with phone numbers, and more. Every student and parent gets one, and should keep it as a handy reference for the next four years.

We've covered the where; now it's time to discuss the who and the how.

For economic as well as social reasons, most students opt for living arrangements that put them in close proximity to one or more roommates during their time at PCA&D. Obviously, making good choices in the beginning is important.

While PCA&D's housing referral service is highly experienced in guiding students toward roommates with similar interests and living habits, the student makes the final selection— which may sound like the end of the process, but it's really just the beginning.

- **Discovering your lifestyle**
- There's more to living harmoniously with others that most of us consciously realize. "That's why we suggest that students draft a roommate agreement. PCA&D provides a [sample agreement](#) in the Housing Guide," says Director of Student Life & Housing Jane Higinbotham. "We want students to address these lifestyle issues right away."
- "We ask students to consider issues such as cleanliness, food, parties, visitors, pets, and borrowing," she says. "For example, everyone's room is their private space. But what about common areas such as kitchen, living room, and bathroom? Whose responsibility is it to keep them clean? These things need to be discussed."